

ISSN 0953 - 8720



STUDY CIRCLE

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JANUARY 27th, 1954

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BULLETIN No. 159 DECEMBER 1993

BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE

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OBJECTS

1. **TO promote interest in and the study of the stamps and postal history of the islands that comprise the British West Indies and in addition BERMUDA, BRITISH GUIANA (GUYANA) and BRITISH HONDURAS (BELIZE) and the Postal History and markings of all other Caribbean territories during any period that they were under British administration or control, and those British Post Offices which operated in the , and Central or South America.**
2. TO issue a quarterly BULLETIN containing articles, items of interest and other features.
3. TO loan books from the Circle library (**home members only**). Borrowers bear postage both ways. **List supplied upon application to Hon. Librarian accompanied by an s.a.e. (9" x 6½") - 2nd Class postage for 150gm rate required.**
4. TO publicise 'wants' and furnish opinions on stamp(s) and/or cover(s) for a nominal fee.
5. TO encourage, assist or sponsor the authorship and publication of definitive handbooks, monographs or other works of reference appropriate to the aim in para 1 above.

MEMBERSHIP&SUBSCRIPTION

MEMBERSHIP - Is WORLD WIDE in scope and open to all whether they be new or advanced collectors.

SUBSCRIPTIONS - The ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION is £6 for members residing in the UK or Europe and £8 for members who reside elsewhere.

Subscriptions (dues) are payable on 1st January each year and, subject to what is mentioned below, in sterling (by personal cheque or Standing Order drawn on a U.K. Bank, a Banker's Draft, International Money Order, Postal Order or local currency *notes* - no coins will be accepted - e.g. dollars, marks, francs etc.).

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PROGRAMME

1994

Sat.	26 February	11.00 am -5.00 pm	WIPEX Derby Suite, Bonnington Hotel, London.
Sat.	23 April	Annual General Meeting and Auction and Social Evening. Bonnington Hotel, London.	

Editors Note: An enjoyable Convention was held at Leamington and we look forward to many more such happy occasions. Next year sees the Circles 40th Anniversary celebrations. The more members that can participate the better the events will be.

For those members that pay their subscription/dues annually please note that the payment is required at the beginning of January. Please note the new North American arrangements.

My thanks go to all of those people that have sent in material for the Bulletin in the past year. All items are welcome and the help in filling the Bulletin is appreciated, and finally, to **ALL** members, the advertisers and all concerned with the production of the Bulletin

“A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND AN ENJOYABLE NEW YEAR”

THE NORTH AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE

In Bulletin No.156 March 1993, I asked for a volunteer to come forward to take over the above important office from Mark W. Swetland.

I am very pleased to be able to inform you that W. Clary Holt, whose mailing address is Post Office Drawer 59, Burlington, North Carolina 27216, has agreed to take over from Mark as from 1st January 1994.

Clary is well known to Study Circle members in the United Kingdom as he and Mrs. Holt have attended our last four Conventions at Leamington Spa. Clary has requested that U.S. dollar checks should be made out to "BWISC" when remitting dues to him.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mark most sincerely for the years which he has spent doing a very important piece of work assisting out North American members and also the Study Circle at the same time; I am sure that we all wish him well and look forward to seeing him and his wife Jean in England again.

Victor Toeg

LEAMINGTON CONVENTION.

The biannual Convention of the Circle commenced on Friday, 8th October, 1993, at the Regent Hotel, Royal Leamington Spa.

A departure from the practice of previous years was that the usual sherry party became a wine and cheese party. Any fears that the provision of seating would restrict the circulation of those present and stem the flow of conversation proved to be unfounded and the innovation seemed to be a great success. Over dinner and in the hotel lounge afterwards, vast armies of Jamaica buffs and small, select groups of collectors of other colonies renewed old friendships, formed new ones and talked long into the night.

On Saturday morning, the Convention was formally opened by our President, Victor Toeg. The Bourse then commenced business. It consisted this year of eight dealers' stands, together with the Circle's own table, organised by Simon Goldblatt, and - another innovation this year - a literature table, master-minded by Charles Freeland. Meanwhile, Mike Rego and Tony Shepherd were organising the very diverse informal displays shown during the day and Janet Sharp, assisted by Laura, Edward and Olivia, was busy selling raffle tickets. All of this was watched over by the Co-ordinator, Tony Farmer, who kept a sharp eye on the timing of events throughout the day.

At noon, Frank Deakin gave his display of what the President, in his introduction, had rightly called "his wonderful collection of Barbados". Tony Shepherd proposed a vote of thanks.

Lunch then followed. In the course of a short speech, the President particularly welcomed guests and visitors from overseas - the latter including such regular attenders as Clary and "B" Holt, Rob Wynstra, Willard Allman and Charles Freeland. Sadly, he also reminded us of the deaths of Ed Addiss, Alex Thomson and Vice-President Bill Townsend in the last two years. After lunch, the draw took place for the raffle - to the great personal satisfaction of Derek Sutcliffe, Clary Holt and Stella Pearse.

The second formal display was of Derek Nathan's British Guiana, which rounded off a splendid philatelic day. The vote of thanks was proposed by Mike Rego.

The President closed the formal part of the Convention at 5.15 and Stella Pearse thanked Victor and the Secretary, Michael Wilson, for the hard work they had put into organising it and all those who had taken an active part in running it.

Eating, drinking and talking took over once more until Sunday morning, leaving us with happy memories of another successful "Leamington week-end".

ALAN F. PEARSE.

WIPEX (Birthday Celebrations)

Members will note from the Study Circle's Programme at the beginning of this Bulletin that we have a full day's meeting at the Bonnington Hotel in London on Saturday 26 February 1994 - to be known as WIPEX ("West Indies Philatelic Exhibition"). What is it? As part of its 40th Birthday celebrations the Study circle is hiring the Derby Suite at the Bonnington Hotel and the meeting will take place from 11.00am to 5.00pm. There will be a number of invited displays, and some dealers will be present. In addition there will be a members' sale table and it is hoped to arrange for "Opinion Service" to operate. At 3.30pm there will be an Auction of selected B.W.I. material conducted by Pennymead Auctions. There will be no mission charge and lunches (or bar service) will be available in the Hotel. So come along and enjoy a day out among fellow enthusiasts.

On Monday 28 February, Stephen Sharp plans to be "at home" to fellow collectors with an interest in St. Vincent. Stephen lives at 34 Lovelace Drive, Pyrford, Woking, Surrey (home Tel. 0932 341356, Work Tel. 0344 744353). The local station, West Byfleet, is 40 minutes from London Waterloo; visitors can be collected from the station. Any member who is interested should contact Stephen direct.

Members will also be interested to know that during STAMPEX, starting on 1 March 1994, the Study Circle has been invited to display a selection of material from all countries/colonies within our sphere of interest.

For the future: please mark your diaries that after the AGM on Saturday 23 April there will be a Social evening, also at the Bonnington Hotel.

Michael Wilson

LEAMINGTON DISPLAY OF BRITISH GUIANA

The main display of the afternoon was given by Derek Nathan. He began by saying that he was very flattered to have been asked to display his collection of British Guiana to the members present. He went on to say that he was not showing much Postal History as much of his material would be at the forthcoming Stampex.

Derek began by stating that he would be showing a number of different topics, confining himself to those areas where he felt that he had been able to add something to what was previously known, and as such he started with the historical development of the proofs of the 1876 issue, stating that when the Crown Agents were asked to take over the purchase of stamps for the Colony in 1875, they immediately terminated the contract with Waterlows and commissioned De La Rue to produce designs. By September 1875 a design featuring the badge of the Colony had been chosen and DLR were instructed to prepare an original die for the production.

Derek continued by saying that this would appear to be an innocent enough brief or so anyone would think. The first proof was pulled on October 21st. Six proofs were pulled in six days before someone had the idea that as this was a picture of a ship they should show the work to an authority on ships. The alterations that were made were so elementary as to defy belief. There had been no horizon; a Union Flag had flown at the mast-head rather than a White Ensign, flown being the word, as it was only attached at one point, the edge of one of the sails had not been a continuous line, the rigging had been impossible and had to be revamped and other lesser mistakes were corrected. Seven more proofs followed in the next eight days, some of them returning to old work which had been changed. But between November 12th and 17th a decision was reached to remove the reef points from the sails, a simplification which allows some of the undated proofs to be placed in order. A signed, passed proof was finally achieved on 19th November. And this was only the inner vignette. When the frame was added on December 10th the first one had three leaf emblems in the corners. By about 11th December it had been decided that five leaves were preferable and this style was used. Eight more proofs were pulled in the next seven days before a passed proof was achieved. This was finally signed off on 17th December 1875, three months after the first engraving. Printing took place between December 18th and February 26th 1876, the date when the dies were signed off in the day book. A comprehensive collection of proof depicting the above were shown. Members attention was

drawn to the original '1 CENT', a simple sans-serif figure, which was marked 'CANCELLED'. It was replaced by the ugly serifed number completely out of keeping with the other figures in the set. Derek stated that it was his reaction to the shape of this serif that led to his discovery of the proof of the wrapper which he would be showing later. Derek continued by showing two plate proofs together with blocks of the two cents showing plate and current numbers and misplaced watermarks. Copies handstamped SPECIMEN were also shown.

Derek went on to state that used copies of this issue were fairly common, so he was trying to show some slightly different usages. He showed a one cent cover that had a rare New Amsterdam backstamp followed by an exchange of letters between Sir David and Lady Chalmers which included one cover franked eight cents which had travelled on the EDINBURGH AND CARSTAIRS SORTING TENDER. There was also an item of Dutch Consular mail showing 4c and 8c and an odd cover to France with an accountancy mark, long after their use had ceased. There were a couple of perforation varieties, and the 1882 CA set perforated SPECIMEN followed by DLR's mock-up to show why the Colony should go over to the key-plate design in order to comply with UPU regulations.

The next section to be displayed was the development of Newspaper Wrappers. Beginning the story with the production of a Die in September 1883, which had a number of alterations from the stamps, the main one being that of the shape of the serif. DLR attempted to print from this design but found that they could not achieve a satisfactory result by machine process, and were forced to print by hand. They wrote to the Crown Agents on 8th November, enclosing mock-ups of a Queen's Head design and offering to produce this more cheaply as well as throwing in the cost of new dies.

Derek showed the original correspondence between the parties with the enclosures of colour roughs, and also the pencil copies they kept for their own records. It was seen that the letter from the Crown Agents to the Colony did the rounds. The Colonial Secretary on 4th December 1883 referred it for the remarks of the Postmaster General, who on 5th December thought it a good idea to switch and save money. On the 6th the Governor referred the matter to the Court of Policy after the Law Officers saw no legal difficulty. However, the Court of Policy decided to stick with the ship design, which continued in use until the mid 1930's.

The letter instructing the Crown Agents to this effect was also shown as were the DLR colour trials for both values.

Samples of the printed wrappers were then shown, followed by used copies. Derek then went on to say that we were now coming to the next mystery. Records show that the Inland rate for newspapers was one cent and that for overseas two cents. It was noted that two cents wrappers could be found used almost from date of issue, one being shown from the following week, but one cent wrappers cannot be found used until ten years later, and then to mainly overseas addresses although the rate is not recorded as having been amended.

The development of the printed postcard was the next area in which Derek displayed material. He began by saying that the cards were produced as part of the UPU requirement and showed a range of colour trials. Derek pointed out that there were two parallel types, one with a full stop over the 'E' of GUYANE, the other with the stop to the right. He then asked the question why should this have happened and continued with his own reasonings. They may have been printed two up with one of each printed together, the slight colour differences noted could be variations on the run or even from later printings; neither Townsend nor Higgins & Gage give any idea of the quantity produced, but his own feeling was that the numbers would not have justified two-up printing. Could there any other explanation? The quantity of each kind seemed to be about equal, but not all the later overprints have been seen in both styles. He then showed a damaged card with a double overprint OFFICIAL which he said may be spurious as no extant record of this exists. The reply card was shown first as a pencil rough, the hand drawn stamp being slightly different on each half of the card. The two perforations were also both shown. Inland postcards were authorised in 1885 but none were then available. Various forms of overprint were used to fill the gap, and most of these were displayed. A colour mock-up of the Inland card, by De La Rue, was shown next, but another detail at this point brought forth Derek's next bone of contention. The cut-out vignette of the ship at the centre of the card appears too wide to have been cut from the one cent stamp, the shading being different from the previous postcards. Where did DLR get the cut-out from? Did they make a special run in grey from the new plate which was shown in red on an item displayed a little later in the show? There was then a proof of the stamp used, slightly different from each previous stamp. The three different styles of SPECIMEN of this card made Derek wonder what the various uses were, whether they were produced at three different times, and why? Revisions of the three cents card were proofed in 1886, the final card was produced as proof 'B'. The overseas rate was reduced to two cents on 1st

January 1891 and it was a year later before overprinted cards appeared. Derek questioned this, but could not find any overprinted cards used in 1891 to support his theory. He also had doubts about Higgins & Gage's statement that the '2' is smaller on the overprints with 14 mm bars. He stated that he could not find any. He thought that they mixed them up with the overprint on the reply card, which was smaller as shown. In 1892 the two cent card was produced, and also the reply card. In 1894 the Inland card was revised without the word 'INLAND' No further changes were made for 45 years, an advantage of not having the Monarch's head in the design. Two slightly different cards were produced in 1939, and in 1945, when the postage was doubled a further card was issued. The final design was in 1955 and used until Independence. Examples of the above were comprehensively displayed for members present to see.

The Diamond Jubilee issue of 1898 followed with not only colour trials and specimens but a few examples of errors, especially the two cents on fifteen cents, double, one without stop. This item being unique, with the missing stop on the lower line. The equivalent stamp with the missing stop on the upper line is in the Royal Collection. Only one sheet was overprinted twice. The progression of the quad-up on stamp 26 was also charted.

Amongst items of the 1931 Centenary issue were a few proofs which were said to be worth a passing glance.

Items of postal history then followed, starting with a few pages of code marks. One item, A4C, being a recent acquisition was written up in pencil for which Derek apologised. Derek then drew our attention to DRE 1, which he believed was issued to Grove and DRE to Agricola, the opposite to Townsend and Howe's positioning. Then followed examples of American style postmarks, including two strikes not recorded elsewhere.

Then followed examples of the 'Girl Pat' label, including the one that got through by the planned route, and the SURINAM - BRITISCH GUIJANA packet mark, followed by a use of the Foreign Section mark thought to have only been used on 12th May 1937, re-appearing on 3rd October 1940.

Included among the items marked 'FOUND IN ORDINARY MAIL' were a two line mark in upper and lower case, one of only two seen, an early use of the best known mark, and also a Tax Mark applied and deleted when the extra postage was paid, and a mark not recorded before which was also show on a letter to Barbados.

Nine pages of various RETURNED LETTER OFFICE marks were then shown, these included a number of interesting items one of which was an oval mark with the words 'NOT RECLAME'. Derek stated that this must be a local copy of the better known, and more accurate wording. Four more previously unrecorded marks amongst others followed; UNCLAIMED - probably a BG mark, one other having been seen; double ring RLO GPO APR 11 1945 - presumably made as a temporary mark after the GPO fire in February of that year destroyed all the instruments; RETURN LETTER OFFICE - not recorded by T & H although other strikes have now been seen. An enormous oval mark from 1948 and a smaller violet mark from 1950, both of which had not previously been seen, and a large RETOUR mark. Derek commented that not all of these marks could possibly have been missed by others interested and that surely he was not the first to show as interest in them.

There then followed four pages of MISSENT marks, including the famous Panton one from ANGUILLA VALLEY.

Derek then displayed a study of American Forces marks followed by British Forces mail during various emergencies.

Derek concluded his display by showing TAX marks. He stated that this study was in its infancy but already he had identified nineteen different marks. The first item shown was something of a puzzle. The franking of 5 cents in April 1890 was 1 cent short and a Tax mark applied. This was then deleted and the letter carried for 5 cents. The rate was reduced to 5 cents about nine months later, according to T & H. Could it have been earlier? He then went on to show a few pages of 'due' marks.

The vote of thanks was given by Tony Shepherd who praised Derek for his wonderful display. The members showed their approval in the usual manner.

(The Leamington display of Barbados by Frank Deakin will be in the March 1994 Bulletin)

BRITISH WEST INDIES - Peter Winter forgeries

BERMUDA



Fig.1



Fig.2

Peter Winter made forgeries of the Perot 1d. black in 1848 (fig.1) and the 1d. red in 1854 (fig.2). The black stamp has the writing in red ink, and the red stamp has the writing in black. An easy test is to put a rule alongside the I of HAMILTON; in the genuine it passes through the left of the M of BERMUDA but in the forgery it coincides with the right leg of the M.

Winter's price for these was 35 Swiss francs each with 85 francs for a cover front.

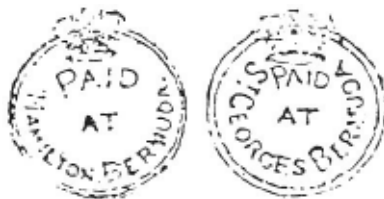


Fig.3

He probably intended making the Hamilton and St. George's Crowned Circle provisionals (fig.3) for in the proofs of cancellations there are examples of both these handstamps.

BRITISH GUIANA

Peter Winter forged all the 1850 "Cotton-Reels" but the legal action taken by the British Library caused his stock to be surrendered so we have no examples to illustrate.

They were all the second setting with the thick frame with the break coming between the GU of GUIANA. He copied all four values including the 12c. error with the 1 missing; this last can be recognised easily as the genuine variety, the third setting with the break over the I of BRIT. The imitations lack the typographical bite of the genuine.

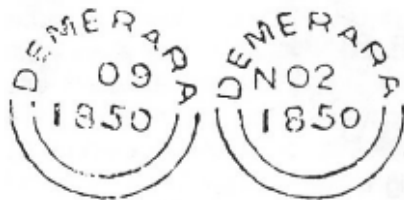


Fig.4

Illustrated (fig.4) are two of the Demerara datestamps used to cancel this issue, one 09 1850 the other N02 1850.

The illustrations of the Cotton Reel in his German 1985 catalogue show that the usual cancellation was the illustrated DEMERARA 09 1850; he also copied a code type BG/A4C/DE7/1 851. He also illustrated a cover front with a pair of 2 cents cancelled 09 1850 and addressed to "Mr. Eleanor Ross, Kings Church, feo Georgetown"; the stamps were initialled "C.H.W." and "F.H.W.". Of his live Cotton Reels illustrated, the initials were "E.D.W.", "C.A.W." and three "F.H.W.".

1852 Lithographed by Waterlow & Sons



Fig.5

These are comparative dangerous imitations as, like the originals they are lithographed. Both values have the stop after the value but the paper on which they are printed differs from the genuine which is highly surfaced and rubs easily.

The 1 cent has three breaks in the masts of the ship and the sea to the left of the ship lacks the clarity of the genuine.

In the 4 cents (fig.5), the sea lacks the clarity of the original.

Both stamps are normally backstamped "Replik" (replica) and Winter's price for these was 50 Swiss francs mint or used and 100 francs on a cover front.

1856 Type-set by Baum & Dallas. Georgetown

This is a particularly interesting issue and illustrated are two of the cancellations, B G C DEC 1856 and DEMERARA Y 29 56 (fig.6).



Fig.6

The initials of the post office officials who signed each stamp were blocks, W.H.L. for W.H. Lorimer, and two varieties of E.D., for E.D. Wright, the clerk in the Colonial Post Office.

The forgeries of the famous ONE CENT are of particular interest.

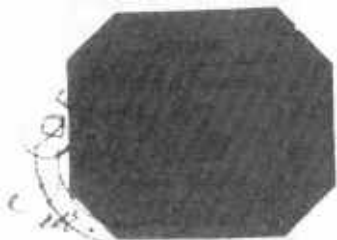


Fig.7



Fig.8

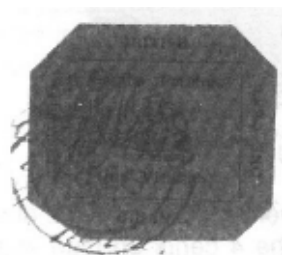


Fig.9

The genuine stamp was initialled "E.D.W." and the stamp was cancelled DEMERARA AP 4 1856. All those examples of the forgery that I have seen are cancelled DEMERARA FE22 1856, one example (fig.7) with written initials "F.W.W.", another (fig.8) with the printed initials "E.D.W." and a third (fig.9) with written "C.A.W.". In the genuine stamp, the last A of GUIANA has a solid top, and in the forgery, the top of the A is a clean triangle.

Winter's price for this forgery was 55 Swiss francs, 75 francs on piece or 110 francs on a cover front. Its great merit is that it is much more attractive than the original.

The companion 4 cents on magenta has written initials “F.W.W.” unused (fig.10). The few used examples are cancelled on FE 22 1856. The B of BRITISH is too small and the N in GUIANA crooked.

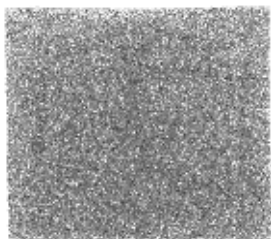


Fig.10



Fig.11

On blue paper I have three examples cut octagonally, one unused (fig.11) (printed initials E.D.W.), and two used on pieces (both with printed initials E.D.W.). The unused and one used (fig.12) have the crooked N in GUIANA, the latter be cancelled NO.2 1850. In the second used example (fig.13) the N is straight and it has the 29 56 cancellation.



Fig.12



Fig.13

Winter's prices for the 4 cents on magenta were 50 Swiss francs unused or used or 110 francs on a cover front. The 4 cents on blue was 54 Swiss francs unused or used and 104 francs on a cover front. In his catalogue Winter illustrated a cover front addressed to “The Lord Bishop of Guiana, Georgetown”; it bore the 1 cent magenta (initialled F.W.W.) and the 4c. blue (initialled E.D.W.); the price was 160 francs.

All the 1856 British Guiana lack the bite of the genuine type-set. When off piece, each stamp has on the reverse a small “REPLIK”.

TRINIDAD

Winter reproduced the 1847 Lady McLeod 5 cents blue but this was withdrawn after the legal action by the British Library. Therefore, I have not seen an example on which to comment. From the illustration it would appear that the top frame of the design was missing, for it is a rough edge of twenty points.

Robson Lowe

BERMUDA

I have a dated copy of St. David's/Bermuda "A" c.d.s. (Ludington H5) for NO 9 88 on ½d stone, watermark Crown CC, which can be fairly described as "scarce". As might be expected, it is overstruck by 2 in bars K4 (in black) I (late use!) and the St. Georges c.d.s. (a different strike of the duplex) - no confirmation date to be seen. According to Ludington, H.T. Hayward, formerly a letter carrier was Receiving Office Keeper at St. David's from 1.10.1886 to 31.12.1922 when he was succeeded by Ada G. Hayward. He was forced to provide his own boat for the daily row to St. George's and could not secure an allowance for this as it might be treated as a precedent for a general rise in remuneration.

I suggest it would be helpful to know which Receiving Offices (R.O's) used inverted year dates (18 for 81 for example) and if the sizes of lettering, circles or setting can provide a clue to place of origin.

Is PM4 undated Hamilton/Bermuda recorded on other values than 1d, 3d, 6d and 1/-?

Peter Jaffé

BRITISH GUIANA

I have a black proof of a 4 cent 1853 ship with a serif to centre line of F(OUR). It appears genuine and could well be from a copper engraving. Is this Moen's essay?

Peter Jaffé

BRITISH GUIANA - FIRST-SERIES CODED POSTMARKS

Recently, I obtained a copy of SG.12 with what appeared to be a first-series coded postmark A 5 C (serified). This is attributed to Sparta and Townsend & Howe give its last known date of use as 21 Mar 1860.



The copy I possess has a date of JN 23 186(?). The last digit of the year is indistinct but appears to be diagonal “1” leaning to the left. Townsend & Howe also state that the last digit of the year is often in manuscript but this one seems to be part of the date slug of the handstamp or perhaps applied subsequently by some other means.

To back up this last idea, the first “1” of the year has a horizontal serif and the indistinct final “1” has a shorter diagonal serif.

Peter Ford

DOMINICA

I can offer the following on Chris May's Dominica air mail cover described on page 33 of BWISC Bulletin No.157. It is possible that seeing the entire cover would be of additional help but for what it is worth, here is part of the story. The contemporary air mail rate to Canada during 1935 was 1/9d per ½ oz. This was the sum of an air fee of 1/7½d + an empire surface rate of 1½d per ounce (see George Bowman's wonderful rate study in Bulletin No.69, p.30). The cover was probably forwarded by surface mail from Dominica to Antigua and then sent onward by air from St. Johns via the U.S. to Canada. This would have provided an opportunity to add Antigua stamps if the letter was short paid (e.g., its weight exceeded one-half ounce). The mysterious part is how the Antigua postage got on the cover. Perhaps there was a friendly clerk or a local business account to draw on in St. Johns. Is it possible that the dumb cancel was also applied in Antigua instead of Dominica? I have no idea nor do I know its significance.

If the Antigua stamps represent the payment for an additional one-half ounce of weight (or fraction), then another 1/9d would be the typically incorrect charge that Leeward mail clerks seem to have made on air mail letters exceeding the first one-half ounce. In practice, the total air rate, not the air fee (in this case 1/7½d) was most frequently charged for the second half ounce, ignoring the fact that the surface mail fee was per ounce.

Human nature generally takes the easier road and a single air rate was probably easier to remember. It would be interesting to learn whether or not postal patrons ever complained of an over charge (if they were ever aware of the fee structure details).

Paul A. Larson

LEEWARD ISLANDS - £1 - October 1942 Printing



I have a block of four of the £1 stamp of the October 1942 printing. The bottom right hand stamp of the block has an approximately 1mm break in the lower frame line of the right hand value tablet. This shows quite clearly on the stamp shown above.

The flaw is not listed by Dickgiesser and Yendall as far as I am aware.

The stamp is from the bottom row of the sheet.

Is this a common flaw? I should be most grateful for any information.

Michael Spaven

MYTHS ABOUT BWI RARITIES

Tony Farmer's article in the September bulletin noting that there are four (not three) surviving blocks of the Leeward is. Sexagenary 5/- is a timely reminder that those marketing stamps are not averse to exaggerating rarity. Lies damn lies and statistics, someone once said; I would add, try to check the facts. This is not easy as much out-of-date information is passed down as lore.

The only systematic way to challenge these myths is to collect photographic records of the items themselves. I have been doing this for ten years now and my comments are based on those records.

To complete Tony's report on the Sexagenary 5/-, the marginal block sold in June by Gibbons for £4,400 (incl. premium) was offered by Western Auctions in 1985, when the description mentions a heavy tone-spot as well as a pinhole. Apart from the block in the Royal Collection, there are two others, Tony's own, which is ex- Charlton-Henry as well as ex- Toeg and the block he mentions as having been sold in 1978 in Bermuda. That was, I believe, bought by Gibbons as it was offered by them in a retail set in 1982. It was subsequently sold by Feldman's in its famous sale of the David Melat Commonwealth collection in New York in November 1985.

Some other well-known "myths" are as follows:

Barbados 1/- blue, error of colour (SG.34a)



I have photocopies of fourteen different examples, and this does not include those in the Royal and Tapling collections. While one looks a little doubtful (albeit offered by a reputable dealer) there are patently more survivors than the "ten or eleven" normally quoted.

Barbados ½d, perf.11 to 12 (SG.36)

This is the scarcest of the high-priced Barbados rarities listed; only six appear to have survived plus the copy in the Royal Collection. Nonetheless, this is more than the "four" copies often referred to.

Barbados 6d orange-vermilion, imperf (SG.60b) used

Very unusually, Stanley Gibbons Part One sticks its neck out and says two examples are known. I have Xeroxes of eight.

Barbados 4d, perf. 14 x 12½ (SG.84)

Another Barbados stamp which is not as rare as the marketing men would have us believe. After careful checking to weed out duplication, which is not so easy in this case, I have identified nineteen unused examples, in addition to the famous Charlton-Henry pair and the sole used example ex-Hurlock. And that does not include examples in the museums and in the Royal Collection.

Bermuda 1/-, p.14 x 12½ vertical strip, imperf horizontally (SG.11a)

A highly priced variety, this is far more common than most similar perforation errors where very few, as a rule, are known. The stamp was printed in four panes of 60 (6 x 10) and one would expect to find twelve vertical strips showing the error from the two adjoining panes. Wrong again! I can show illustrations of fifteen unused plus two used pairs or strips. Unfortunately, though two pieces are in blocks, none exist with side margins to help a reconstruction.

British Guiana 1856 1c black and magenta (SG.23)

A prize will go to the first person who can show me an attested photograph of the ashes of the second copy Arthur Hind is reputed to have burnt with his cigar in order to preserve his uniqueness

British Honduras - Belize Paid mark in horizontal bars

Ed Addiss demonstrated in the BCPSG journal that the Belize crowned circle is far less rare than its price would suggest (and more have turned up since). Also that the long-recorded "Belize" straight line mark is fictitious. The preadhesive mark recognised by specialists as the rarest (excluding the Ship Letter) is the "Belize Paid" in a barred circle. However, even here "new" copies keep appearing. I have now seen evidence of four copies in its main period of use (1871-8) plus another on an 1891 cover that may be an official paid usage.

Cayman Is. 1908 2½d on 4d (SG.35)

A recent sale catalogue promoted a mint block as unique. It is true that there has not to my knowledge, been another block on the market for a long time but whatever happened to the blocks of eight and twelve in the old-time Adutt collection? The block of twelve was from the left hand pane top two rows and showed the "Glover" flaw on position 6. I find it hard to believe that these magnificent blocks were split into singles or pairs. However, neither of these blocks contains the block of four mentioned, nor indeed the upper right plate block which is in the Royal Collection.

Used examples of this stamp are also sufficiently scarce to justify some boasting, but not as much as some sellers would have us believe. I have assembled photocopies of some forty singles, plus three post-dated pairs. But no more than twelve of the singles appear to have been date-stamped 12th Feb 1908, the only legitimate date of usage. One should also not forget the two covers (originally in the Watkin Collection) which travelled on the Zenaida, nor three post-dated usages on cover.

The auction houses do not, however, stretch the truth when they describe the double overprints as rare! I can cite only four mint examples (one in the Royal Collection) and the one used (ex- LLOYD-LOWLES).

Cayman is. War Tax 1½d on 2½d (SG.55).

I have to disappoint those members who own mint blocks - there are at least fifteen blocks of four and one of six. In addition a Robson Lowe sale in October 1955 contained unillustrated mint blocks of four, eight (4 x 2) and twelve (4 x 3). In reality, used singles are hardly any more common than mint blocks.

Jamaica 1921 6d Slavery stamp (SG footnote above SG.90)

This rare unissued stamp is highly prized with justification. It is unlikely we will ever get the chance to acquire the mint block in the Royal Collection. Otherwise, I have records of six examples.

Jamaica 1/- inverted frame (SG.85a)

Though it fetches a similar price, this is a far less scarce stamp. The Williams brothers recorded two mint blocks and the Charlton-Henry collection had a corner pair. In addition, I have to date illustrations of sixteen mint and eight used examples, and I doubt this record is complete.

Montserrat QV 6d blue-green inverted 'S' variety (SG.3a)



This variety is sometimes described as unique because only one sheet was printed in the blue-green shade. Those making this assertion prove their ignorance as there are two settings on the sheet, each showing an inverted 'S'. Both are recorded. The scarcity of the blocks of this stamp are usually overestimated too. Three are well-known, a fourth (ex- Boucher) less so.

Nevis 1876 1/- litho imperf between strip of three (SG.20b).

Four horizontal strips have been recorded from adjoining positions. This has led those offering a strip to state that the variety only occurred on a single sheet. However, as the Boyd-Dale catalogue reminded us, there is another unsevered sheet, which was previously in the Crocker and Dibble collections.

St. Vincent 1/- brown (SG.14) block of four

A case of over-estimating scarcity, you will by now have gathered, is rather unusual. The excellent handbook by Pierce, Messenger and Lowe (PML) is generally a mine of information on the surviving multiples. It records, for the 1/- brown, a block of nine (now in the Jaffé collection) and three blocks of four, ex- Charlton-Henry, Lickfold and the author (who, for this section of the book, was Arthur Pierce). In fact, the Charlton-Henry and Lickfold blocks are the same one. Moreover, this is one of the very few Br. Empire stamps of which the Royal Collection does not possess a block (or, at least, did not when the monumental listing by Sir John Wilson was compiled).

St. Vincent QV ½d green, perf.12 (SG.42)

In a few cases, one more block has come to light than is listed in PML, but it remains a very good effort. A rare exception is provided by that difficult little stamp, the 1884 ½d - PML lists only three blocks but, as Vincent Duggleby has reminded us, there is also a block of six and several more blocks of four - I would estimate about ten but I do not have illustrations of all of them. Moreover, in a Bournemouth, sale in Feb 1967 a block of 42 (7 x 6) was offered, one row being creased.

Tobago 1d in manuscript on 6d bisect (SG.7) mint

A well-known US auction house has offered a number of examples of this stamp in recent years at very high prices. I have copies of eight catalogue illustrations and I am not sure whether they include a mint pair sold by Plumridge in 1923.

Turks Is. 1928 2/- imperf in blue

The Robson Lowe sale catalogue of 19th Sept 1991, offering a single of this proof, stated the owners view that it was the only example known apart from the block owned by M.H. Ludington. However, in the recent past, I have recorded two other singles which are clearly different, a pair and a block of four. Still, it is far scarcer than the other values commonly met with.

Charles Freeland

ST VINCENT - Duke de Polignac Covers

Covers addressed to the Duke de Polignac at his Paris address (No.10 Place Louise XV) in France concerning his estates in St Vincent have graced most famous collections sold since the Second World War. Trying to establish the origin and full extent of these marvellous Perkins Bacon covers (1858-1871) has proved surprisingly difficult and as far as I am aware no one has published any detailed information about the Duke's activities.

There are vague references to the covers being sold piecemeal just after the war, but by whom and to whom remains a mystery (at least to me). Maybe other members do have more precise information and if so, surely it is time to record as much as is known about the correspondence.

As far as I know the earliest Polignac item (in my own collection) is a ship letter addressed to the Duke in Bavaria and sent from St Vincent on 24 July 1844 through Bristol, London, Paris and Augsburg to Munich arriving on 27 August (8d ship letter rate plus 5d to Calais, and 1/3d onwards to Germany from London and marked PD accordingly).

I have always been puzzled as to why the letter was sent direct to Bavaria and not re-addressed from Paris as is the case with several later letters. Then recently and quite by chance I came across a reference in the St Vincent Gazette and Weekly Advertiser (at the Public Record Office) dated 30 December 1843. The news item reported that "The order issued to the Prince de Polignac to quit Paris is confirmed by an article in the Courier Francais. The Prince was preparing to quit Paris Monday next on his return to Bavaria".

Why and when did he return? Perhaps St Vincent specialists (or those with access to French contacts and archives) can solve the mystery. Just for the record in the above entire the Duke's agent is complaining about the charges made by British merchants and the way that the accounts of the estate are made up to make them appear better than they really are--as we know, not unusual among the planters in those days.

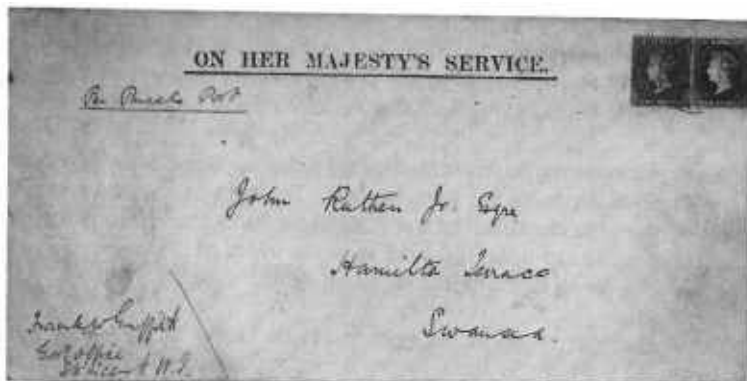
Vincent Duggleby

ST VINCENT

An item coming up in a future Phillips British Commonwealth sale on 3rd Feb 1994 deserves mention.

The item is a white O.H.M.S cover addressed to Swansea bearing 1d and 6d tied by a 25mm PARCELS POST ST VINCENT/C/DE13/93 c.d.s. with manuscript endorsements per Parcel Post and Frank Griffiths/Govt Office/St Vincent WI.

Probably more important is the reverse of the cover which bears two almost complete labels.



This larger label is a Parcel Post/Customs declaration label stating that the envelope contains postage stamps valued at 5/-, the other label is a St Vincent foreign and colonial Parcel Post label endorsed No.3 with 3d inland postage.

In the book St Vincent by Pierce, Messenger and Lowe, only two recorded dates are listed for this cancellation, 19-4-94 and 4-8-99.

Brian Cartwright

B.W.I. AUCTION - No. 22

Material accepted for inclusion in the Auction will be offered for sale on the following terms:-

- 1 All lots may be sold with or without reserve and the seller may participate in the bidding either himself or by an agent.
- 2 The buyer to be the highest bidder.
- 3 Wherever possible the description of a lot will include an estimate by the Circle of the price which it is expected to realise, and the lot will not be sold without the consent of the seller at substantially below 75% of estimate.
- 4 The Auctioneer will be appointed by the Auctions Sub-Committee designated by the Circle to organise the Auction Sale. The bidding shall be under the control and at the sole discretion of the Auctioneer, who shall have power to settle all disputes and to re-open the bidding in the event of dispute. He may withdraw lots or group two or more lots together without assigning a reason.
- 5 The Auctioneer reserves the right to bid on behalf of sellers and prospective buyers but shall not be liable for any errors or omissions in executing instructions to bid.
- 6 Lots will be sold with all faults, imperfections and errors of description and the Circle cannot be held responsible for the genuineness of any lot or of an individual item therein. Where however the buyer within 14 days after receipt of a lot (or such further time as the Auctions Sub-Committee may allow) satisfies the Auction Sub-Committee that there is a substantial inaccuracy in the description and returns the lot in unaltered condition, the sale of that lot will be rescinded and the purchase price refunded to the buyer less any costs and expenses incurred by the Circle in connection with the sale.
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8 Sale Commission charged to the seller will be:-

On each lot sold: 10p on the first £1 or lower realisation, thereafter 10%.

On each lot unsold: 10p.

On each lot withdrawn by the seller: sale commission on 75% of the estimated value.

On each lot unsold through failing to reach the seller's reserve: sale commission on the reserve price.

These conditions apply as between buyer and/or seller and every officer member and agent of the Circle concerned on behalf of the Circle with any aspect of the Auction Sale.

Further Information:

- a All correspondence please to SIMON GOLDBLATT, 39 ESSEX STREET, LONDON WC2.
- b Do not send any material for sale UNLESS it can be sent as an ordinary letter. For all bulkier items write to Simon Goldblatt first to find out whether these can be accepted.
- c Stamps and Postal history items are equally welcome but, in the interest of both buyers and sellers, the Sub-Committee will not be accepting material for sale unless it has in their opinion some potential interest to members of the Circle.
- d MATERIAL TO BE INCLUDED IN THE CATALOGUE FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MARCH 1994 BULLETIN MUST REACH SIMON GOLDBLATT BY 12TH JANUARY 1994 AT LATEST.
- e The Auction Sub-Committee will be grateful for any specialised information which you include with your material for sale and for any personal assessment of its value, although no undertaking can be given that the Auction estimate will coincide with your own assessment. Remember that the more care you yourself take with the selection of items for sale, the better the realisation to be expected.
- f The Auction Sub-Committee will not be responsible for the loss of or damage to items in their custody but unless you instruct to the contrary your material for sale will, if practicable, be held insured while in the hands of the Sub-Committee and the small cost will be divided rateably between the sellers.
- g Please DO NOT write asking for lots to be sent for viewing by post, as the Auctions Sub-Committee are not equipped to offer this service. However, a "xerox" copy could be sent to you provided that with your request you enclose an S.A.E. together with an additional 36p stamp to cover cost.

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Froud, S.

McBride, E.H.W.

Ramphal, Dr.P.J.

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BWI. BRG (CA)
JAM (CA)

Address Changes

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Burke, P.W.C.

Kelly, S.R.A.

Neil, N.R.J.

Ward, L.

AROUND THE CARIBBEAN

NEVIS

The Nevis Island Government operates three Post Offices in GINGERLAND, NEWCASTLE and the main office in CHARLESTOWN the capital. The Postmaster is Mrs. Eugenie Hector.

Opening hours are as follows:- Post Offices - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 8.00am to 3.00pm. Thursday 8.00am to 11.00am. Philatelic Bureau - Monday to Friday 8.00am to 4.00pm.

ST. LUCIA

The main post office is the G.P.O. in Castries. District Post Offices are located at Anse La Raye, Dennery, Gablewoods Mall, Gros Islet, La Clery, Marchand, Micoud, Soufriere and Vieux Fort. Sub Post Offices are located at Americ, Augier, Aux Lyons, Babonneau, Balata, Banse, Belle Vue, Bexon, Blanchard, Bocage, Bogius, Canaries, Chaussee, Choiseul, Ciceron, Cul De Sac, Debrieul, Etangs, Fond Assau, Fond St. Jacques, Gardette, Garrand, Grace, Grand Riviere (Dennery), Grand Riviere (Gros Islet), Hospital Road, Jacmel, Laborie, La Croix Maingot, La Pointe, La Ressource, Leslie Land, Londonderry, Delaide, Millet, Marc, Marisule, Marigot, Monchy, Mon Repos, Moreau, Morne Sion, Patience, Perrot, Saltibus, Ti Rocher, Victoria, Vanard and Desruisseaux.

The Postmaster General is Miss Ianthe Charlemagne.

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